



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
MARINE CORPS RECRUITING COMMAND
3280 RUSSELL ROAD
QUANTICO VA 22134-5103

MCRCO 1700.1B
G-1

APR 5 2004

MARINE CORPS RECRUITING COMMAND ORDER 1700.1B

From: Commanding General
To: Distribution List

Subj: REQUEST MAST

Ref: (a) MCO 1700.23E
(b) U.S. Navy Regulations
(c) Marine Corps Manual
(d) MCO P1900.16F
(e) JAGMAN
(f) MCO P5354.1D

Encl: (1) Command Request Mast Program
(2) Marine Corps Request Mast Application (NAVMC 11296)

1. Purpose. This Order promulgates the Request Mast policy for the Marine Corps Recruiting Command (MCRC).

2. Cancellation. MCRCO 1700.1A.

3. Summary of Revision. This Order contains significant revisions which clarify and streamline Request Mast policy and procedure in accordance with reference (a), and should be reviewed in its entirety.

4. Background. The right of all Marines to directly communicate grievances to, or seek assistance from, their commanding officers is established in U.S. Navy Regulations (Arts. 0820c and 1151.1) and the Marine Corps Manual (par. 2808) and is exercised through the formal process of Request Mast. Request Mast includes both the right of the Marine to communicate with the commander, normally in person, and the requirement that the commander consider the matter and personally respond to the Marine requesting mast. Request Mast provides a Marine the opportunity to communicate not only with his or her immediate commanding officer, but also with any superior commander in the chain of command up to and including the Marine's immediate commanding general. Request Mast also provides commanders with firsthand knowledge of the morale and general welfare of the command. To be effective, Request Mast must have the wholehearted support of those to whom the leadership of Marines is entrusted. Anyone who attempts to deprive a Marine of the right to Request Mast, through

6. Policy

a. Request Mast is the principle means for a Marine to formally communicate a grievance to, or seek assistance from, his or her commander. The process does not include those outside such as subordinate officers or Staff Non-Commissioned Officers (SNCOs)/Non-Commission Officers (NCOs).

b. Request Mast is not intended to be used for the purpose of harassment, avoiding duty, or intentionally interfering with the commander's ability to carry out the functions and mission of the command.

c. A commander may deny a Request Mast application if there is another specific avenue of redress available to the Marine. Commanders should carefully evaluate each Request Mast to determine if other peripheral issues should be addressed; accordingly, commanders may wish to hear the Marine's presentation of matters before making a decision to deny. The commanding officer shall explain to the Marine why the Request Mast application was denied and, if appropriate, what procedure must be followed to resolve the issue. The authority to deny a Request Mast includes authority to refuse to further process the Request Mast. Whenever a commander denies a Request Mast under this authority, he or she shall, within a reasonable time, forward a report of such action and the basis therefore to the immediate commanding general via the chain of command. In cases in which the officer denying a Request Mast is the immediate commanding general, no such report need be made. The following are some examples to which other avenues of redress apply:

(1) The Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) provides for the protection of the rights of a Marine at every stage of disciplinary action from investigation through final review or appeal. Therefore, a commander may deny a Request Mast that has as its subject such disciplinary action whether contemplated, pending, in progress, or final. Request Mast is not intended to be used as a means of collateral attack against the proceedings, punishment, or findings and sentence resulting from disciplinary action brought under the UCMJ.

(2) References (b), (c) and (d), chapters 4 and 6, contains provisions for the protection of rights of Marines being processed for involuntary administrative separation. Accordingly, commanders may deny a Request Mast that has as its subject such involuntary

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take action upon the request.

(2) Marines assigned to Headquarters, Marine Corps Recruiting Command will follow the policies and procedures set forth in the Headquarters and Service Battalion Order 1700.2H. Request Masts for officers in the MCRC will be coordinated by the MCRC Adjutant. Request Mast for enlisted personnel in the MCRC will be coordinated by the MCRC Sergeant Major. Request Masts will be submitted utilizing the immediate chain of command, which includes MCRC Section Heads and the MCRC Sergeant Major, Tenant Activities Company Commander, Headquarters and Service Battalion Commander, and if necessary the Commander, Marine Corps Base, Quantico.

(3) Applications for Request Mast with the Commandant of the Marine Corps or with the Secretary of the Navy via the Commandant of the Marine Corps will only be considered if specifically recommended by the commanding general endorsing the application. Absent such specific recommendation, that commander shall not forward the application. Any application received at Headquarters, United States Marine Corps that does not include a recommendation for consideration and any not forwarded via the chain of command will be returned without action. Such applications for Request Mast must be in writing and those addressed to the Commandant of the Marine Corps will be answered in writing. Those addressed to the Secretary of the Navy via the Commandant of the Marine Corps will be forwarded with a recommended response.

(4) Request Mast applications to the Commandant of the Marine Corps will be handled by the Inspector General of the Marine Corps (IGMC).

h. Nothing in this Order is intended to expand or abridge the rights of Marines otherwise guaranteed by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, Federal law or applicable Department of Defense, Navy, or other Marine Corps regulations. The exercise of such rights is not governed by the procedures contained in this Order.

i. Commanding generals may coordinate with one another to provide for the availability of another commanding general to conduct Request Mast whenever the circumstances require an exception to the provisions of this enclosure.

j. Enclosure (1) contains instructions for establishing a command Request Mast program and procedures for processing Request Mast applications. Only those procedural exceptions provided for in

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(b) In matters which are beyond the commander's authority to resolve, forward the Request Mast to the next higher commander for consideration and appropriate action.

(6) Ensure that the records, proceedings, and final dispositions of Request Masts are properly safeguarded to prevent such information from having a prejudicial effect on the Marine. Request Mast records shall be maintained separately from service records.

(7) Ensure compliance with applicable provisions of this Order.

(8) Exercise those disciplinary or administrative options considered appropriate if a Marine commits or attempts to commit interference or reprisal against any Marine exercising his or her right to Request Mast as indicated in paragraph 6.1. above.

b. MCRC Sergeant Major. Shall have cognizance over all matters involving Request Mast for enlisted personnel at the MCRC Headquarters prior to forwarding to Tenant Activities Company Commander.

8. Records Disposition. Pursuant to SECNAVINST 5212.5C, Request Mast records are to be retained for 2 years from the date final action is taken.



C. CORTEZ

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resolved to his or her satisfaction, but that the Marine will be afforded the opportunity to address the issue with the commanding officer.

f. A statement that once the Marine has indicated the desire to Request Mast with the commander, NCOs, SNCOs and officers subordinate to the commanding officer will make no effort to delay the Request Mast process in order to solve the problem themselves but rather will focus their effort on making the Marine available to the commander.

3. Additionally, the command Request Mast program directive will contain the following guidance and instructions for the processing of Request Mast applications:

a. A requirement that each intermediate commander shall attempt to resolve the Marine's Request Mast issue, if revealed, without delay. If the issue has not been addressed to the Marine's satisfaction, the intermediate commander shall forward the application via the chain of command without delay to the commander to whom it is addressed. In general, there should be no more than 1 working day delay at any level of command. Explanations for delay must be provided to the Marine and forwarded via the chain of command.

b. A requirement that Request Mast will be conducted at the earliest reasonable time. In general, there should be no more than 1 working day delay at any level of command. Commanders will hear emergency cases as soon as possible, normally within twenty-four hours of the time the application is initially submitted. For purposes of example, to determine whether a Request Mast is an emergency case, among other things, consider (1) whether the Marine is subject to an ongoing hardship (e.g., delay in receiving pay); (2) the severity of hardship, if any; and (3) if the issue will remain unresolved upon a certain date, time, or expected event in the immediate future (e.g., request for leave to attend a relative's funeral being denied).

c. A requirement that commanders shall make every effort to provide the Marine with an opportunity to Request Mast in person. If personal appearance is not practical, the commander shall respond in writing to the Request Mast. The commander will also provide an explanation of why a personal appearance was not practical.

d. A requirement that the commander with whom a Marine has

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10/20/2004
Military Whistleblower Protection Act as implemented by SECNAVINST 5370.7, Military Whistleblower Protection.

f. A requirement that a Marine will make a written statement on the Request Mast or attached sheet indicating that he or she has had the opportunity to communicate directly with the commanding officer and has been informed of any actions to be taken by the commander conducting the Request Mast

g. A requirement that if a Request Mast addressed to a higher commander is resolved at a lower level, the Marine will make a written statement on the Request Mast or attached sheet indicating that he or she is satisfied with the action taken at the lower level and has chosen to voluntarily withdraw the Request Mast. This statement will be jointly signed by the Marine and a witness.

4. Marines confined in correctional facilities have the right to Request Mast. A Request Mast marked "To be opened by the Commanding Officer/Commanding General only" will not be opened by correctional facilities personnel.

ENCLOSURE (1)

PART II: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE OFFICER CONDUCTING REQUEST MAST

10. DISPOSITION: (Provide a detailed explanation of actions taken or attempted to resolve the complaint/problem, to include any other referrals. If an inquiry/investigation was initiated as a result of this complaint, provide the type conducted and the results. Attach additional sheets as necessary.)

COMMANDING OFFICER SIGNATURE/DATE

PART III: APPLICANT'S ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF REQUEST MAST

(Applicant should initial/complete the appropriate statement(s))

_____ I have had the opportunity to communicate directly with my Commanding Officer named in Block 8a and understand the disposition or probable disposition of my problem/complaint.

_____ I have had the opportunity to communicate directly with _____ (name and billet of commanding officer subordinate to officer named in Block 8a), understand the disposition or probable disposition of my problem/complaint, and voluntarily withdraw this Request Mast.

_____ I have not had the opportunity to communicate directly with my Commanding Officer named in Block 8a.

_____ I have had the opportunity to communicate directly with my Commanding Officer named in Block 8a but have not been informed of the disposition or probable disposition of my problem/complaint.

WITNESS' SIGNATURE/DATE

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE/DATE